

A WONDER OF A MAN.

Thrilling Episodes from
the New Life of the
Great Explorer,
Burton.

"The True Life of Captain Sir Richard F. Burton," by his niece, Georgiana M. Stisted, tells the story of one of the most fascinating men this century has produced. The present book, which is intended by its authoress to be a popular one, is published by D. Appleton & Co.

Burton was a great explorer and a great scholar, the only man in recent times who has combined the two qualities in so high a degree. He went among unexplored and Oriental races without machine guns and military forces and studied them as better equipped men have not been able to do. The tales of Burton's physical prowess, his wonderful endurance, good nature, and courage make this biography a very attractive book.

Burton's great achievement in exploration was his journey to Lake Tanganyika, in Central Africa, in 1858. His great literary work was his translation of the "Arabian Nights," which is the only complete rendering into a European language of the chief work of Oriental literature.

Burton began the study of Arabic while his father was still trying to force him to enter the Church. He had not been in the Indian army two years before he had mastered six Oriental languages. He was still a young lieutenant when he made his famous journey to the holy Mohammedan cities of Mecca and Medina, a journey which had never been accomplished by an Englishman before. He disguised himself as a Mohammedan pilgrim, and was accepted as such by his fellow travellers. The account of his first day in Mecca is well worth quoting:

"Scarcely had the first smile of morning dawned upon the rugged head of Abu Kibara, a hill which bounds Mecca to the east, than our Hadji rose, bathed and proceeded in pilgrim garb to the Great Mosque, entering by the principal northern door, he descended two flights of steps, traversed a cloister and stood in sight of the Kiblah of El Islam, the place to which the Moslem turns in prayer from all quarters of the globe.

"The Great Mosque consists of a large quadrangle surrounded by arcades or cloisters and entered by nineteen gates, surrounded by seven minarets. In the centre stands the Kaabah, which was the temple of Mecca ages before the days of Mohammed.

"This far-famed Kaabah, the most interesting feature of the Moslem mosque, is an oblong structure, sixteen paces in length, fourteen in breadth, and from seven to eight feet high. Constructed of grey granite, it stands upon a base of feet high, and its roof being almost flat,

it presents at a distance the appearance of a perfect cube. It is partly covered with black drapery, a mixture of cloth and silk, with a golden zone running round its upper portion, the hangings in front of the door are also embroidered. This Kiblah, as it is called, is renewed every year, and the origin of the custom must be sought in the ancient practice of typifying the church visible by a virgin or bride.

"For some minutes Burton gazed at this venerable object with interest and delight. True, there were no giant fragments of hoary antiquity, as in Egypt; no remains of graceful and harmonious beauty, as in Greece or Italy. Yet the view was strange, unique—and how few aliens had looked upon the celebrated shrine! The mirage medium of fancy invested the huge structure and its gloomy pail with peculiar charm; it was as if the waving wings of angels, not the sweet breeze of morning, were agitating and swelling the black covering of the Bayt Allah. Moreover, the plans and hopes of many a year were here partially realized, and our hero, as he stood a stranger in this Mohammedan sanctuary, felt for a moment all the triumph of a victory over conditions which had

Burton's next work of importance was a journey to Harar, an unknown country in Northeastern Africa. This was followed after some years by his discovery of Lake Tanganyika, an event which led to the general exploration of Central Africa.

Burton's marriage made it desirable for him to increase his income considerably and he entered the Consular service. Eventually he obtained the Consulate at Damascus, a post which delighted him, but which he eventually lost through a series of unfortunate circumstances.

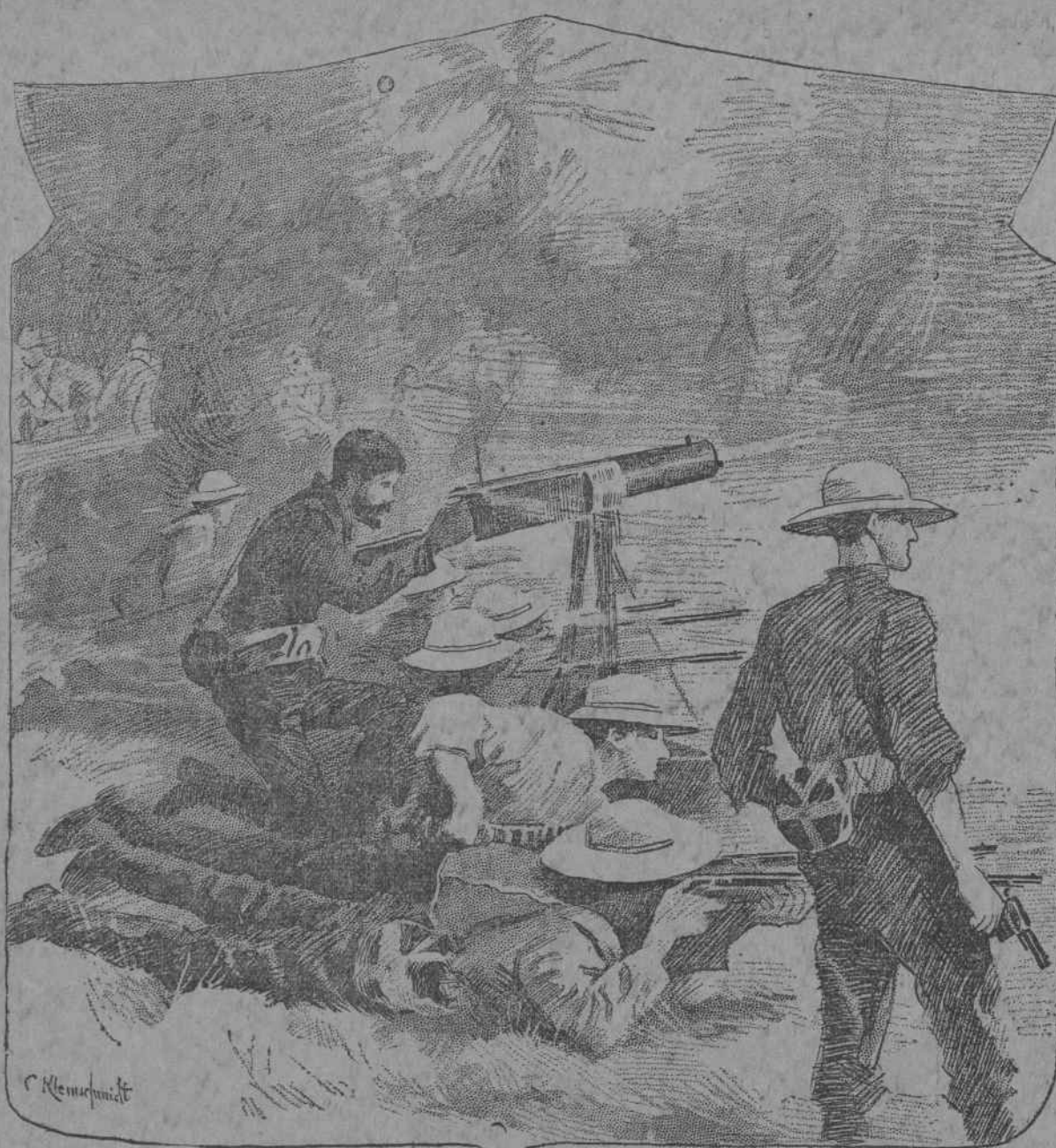
Mrs. Burton gathered an extraordinary variety of people at her receptions at the consulate of Damascus. Among her most intimate friends was an English woman, Jane Digby, who had capped her wild career by marrying her Arab camel driver.

"More Bedawi than the Bedawi," says the biographer, "this eccentric woman added her tribe by every means in her power (and he it remembered she was a very clever woman) in their endeavor to conceal the wells and extort blackmail from all Europeans who visited Palmyra. Hearing that the Burtons intended to journey thither, and that the Consul had no intention of paying the usual tribute, Jane, fearing the attempt, if successful, might deprive her people of a considerable source of revenue, resorted to stratagem. Professing herself anxious about the safety of her English friends, she offered one of her trusty chieftains as an escort to assist them in keeping clear of the Bedawi raids. The man, of course, was secretly instructed to lead the Burtons into ambush, where they could be pounced upon by his tribe and kept prisoners until ransomed. Here, however, our traveler was not to be so hoodwinked. He accepted the offer most politely, but as soon as the party was well on route, he deprived the spy of his name and his instructions, retaining both as hostages until the return journey to Damascus."

Some misunderstanding with the Moslem authorities, which his niece attributes to Mrs. Burton, brought about his removal from Damascus. After many wanderings he was appointed Consul at Trieste. While he held this office he published his "Thousand Nights and a Night," which unexpectedly brought him a small fortune—\$80,000, and laid the basis of his future wealth.

"The history of this revelation of Orientalism is romantic to a degree. With many intermissions it had taken thirty-two years to write; and laborious though the work had often proved, it never failed to afford its author interest and amusement. During long years of official exile to the deadly climates of East and West Africa and the dull half-lightings of South America, it was a faithful talisman against ennui and despondency. From disagreeable or commonplace surroundings the Jin bore away the translator to the land of his predilection—Arabia—a region so familiar to his mind that even when he cast his first glance at the scene, he tells us, it seemed a reminiscence of some bygone metaphysical life in the far distant past.

"Again he stood under the diaphanous skies, in air glorious as ether, whose very



Maxim Guns Mowing Down the Black Troops of Benin's King.

Central Africa, he came to the conclusion after many a confabulation with Dr. Steinhilber, who was as good an Arabist as himself, that while the name of this wonderful treasure of Moslem folklore is familiar to almost every English child, no student ignorant of the language is aware of the valuable it contains. Even graybeards at Oxford had to content themselves with selected, diluted and abridged transcripts.

"It progressed fitfully amid a host of obstacles. Burton had several large deal tables in his study, each devoted to a different set of books and manuscripts, and cleared off, the 'Nights' became all paramount. He labored incessantly at his gigantic task until 1880, when the process of copying began, and he felt himself within measurable distance of its completion.

The conception of this invaluable addition to English literature took place shortly after the 'Pilgrimage to Mecca' and 'Medina'. Burton arrived at Aden in the winter of 1852, and while lodging with the family whose absence he regretted, he was one day in the street when he met a

woolen tents of the Bedawi, mere dots in the boundless waste, the camp fire shining like a glow-worm in the village centre, and the Shaiyks gravely taking their places round the blaze, the women and children standing motionless outside the ring while their guests rewarded their hospitality by reading a few pages of their favorite tales.

"Even in wild Somaliland no one turned a deaf ear to these fairy stories, and many a time did our traveler keep the men of his caravans in good humor under trying circumstances by telling of 'Mighty Harun-al-Rashid, or the Immortal Barber.'

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MAXIM GUNS IN BENIN.

Mowing Down the Black
Troops of the Last of
the Three Kings of
Bankyoo.

While the attention of the world has been attracted to Crete and the action of the powers of Europe, England has been quietly sawing wood in other directions. She has just concluded one of her little wars.

The Benin campaign has attracted little attention, but it has brought under English dominion more square miles of territory than there are square feet in Crete, and almost as many people as there are in the whole of Greece. While England bombards the Christians in Crete, she has made war upon the King of Benin because he was a heathen.

A force of marines and infantry has been sent to the heart of the Benin country armed with Maxim guns and dynamite for the purpose of "advancing Christianity" in the wilds of Africa, and these same troops, now that they have returned to England, are likely to be dispatched to Crete to make war upon the Christians there. There is, however, no getting away from the fact that the King of Benin was a heathen.

He was one of the most bloodthirsty individuals who have recently come to the surface. He richly deserved the fate that has befallen him. He was the last of the Three Nigger Kings of Bankyoo. This cheerful trio have been holding high revel on the west coast of Africa for a good many years.

There was Prempeh, of Ashantee, he of the gold umbrellas, Behanzin, of Dahomey, with a bodyguard of armed women, and His Royal Highness Dubour, of Benin, whose capital was the City of Blood. Their kingdoms adjoined, and they had an inviolable combination between them.

These powerful potentates were known all along the west coast of Africa as the Big Three. Each was supreme within his own dominions, and when they acted in concert their name struck terror to the native tribes of the interior.

Like the Three Tailors, of Tooley street, the Three Nigger Kings of Bankyoo said, "We are the people," and they defied the powers of Europe.

The ruler of Dahomey was the first to go. The French sent an expedition out to him, dethroned him, seized his throne, and annexed his country. Incidentally, the looters of Paris found much to laugh at in the celebrated female warriors of Dahomey, so that Behanzin did not fall without contributing his quota to the gaiety of nations.

Then came the turn of King Prempeh of Ashantee, perhaps the most picturesque ruffian of the three. Prempeh, chewing a

under a gold umbrella, one leg of which rested on a soap box, as the English commissioners approached him. This man was steeped in superstition, and spent three days sucking his charm before he would let the English commissioners in.

When told that he must go, that he had lost the Yellow Riding Jacket, that he had been turned down in London and that in general his name was Denis, he showed fight. The English invaders gave him the option of submitting peacefully, signing a treaty and allowing an English resident commissioner to rule over him at Comma-sie.

But this was too much for Prempeh. He was not willing to hold down a throne and draw his pay without the glory of ruling. He did not want to be jeered at by those who had trembled before him.

So he defied England, called his legions around him and prepared to wipe the British off the face of the earth. The English easily brought him to time. Then, with the irony of fate, they compelled Prempeh to live as a prisoner with his mother-in-law, and this interesting couple are now locked up on the Gold Coast.

The combination being smashed, Dubour soon followed. This man might have saved himself by taking warning from the fate of his brothers. But instead of demeaning himself humbly and making professions of morality he redoubled the human sacrifices that gave a terrible reputation to his capital, and now he has gone to join the long list of other kings who are out of a job.

The British expedition to Benin has just returned to England, and the soldiers have brought back pieces of gold, bits of ivory and an interesting collection of bites, scars and scratches they received in the jungle. The expeditionary force, which consisted of about 800 men, suffered but little loss.

Eight men were killed and forty-five wounded, but the slaughter among the native troops was, according to English accounts, something astonishing. And this need not be wondered at.

While the British found to their surprise that the troops of the King of Benin were armed with modern rifles and had even smokeless powder, yet they were wholly lacking in discipline or organization and were so ignorant of war that they were more frightened by war rockets than by Maxim guns. The Maxims "looked innocent" and did not make much of a fuss as they went off.

The war rockets, however, soared into the air at night with much noise, fire and vari-colored lights, and these struck terror into the hearts of the Benin troops lurking in the bushes. The chieftains were unable to rally their ignorant followers when these skyrockets and Roman candles were let off by the enemy and the legions upon which Dubour had relied literally took to the woods.

The Deadly Oath.

An examination of a Testament long used in an English court produced results that should have an interest in this country.

Mr. Richardson, consulting chemist to the Bradford Corporation, has just completed an analysis of a Testament used in a court house for sixty years, and said to have been kissed by 40,000 people. The analysis was with a view of establishing the danger of a kiss of kissing the book. There were no germs of typhoid, tuberculosis or diphtheria. The only germ of a dubious character was the "pus cocci," and it was found in the "pus cocci" skin.

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